United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1427
2 July 1993

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Haitian Armed Forces accept Special Envoy's plan for Haiti; small details to be ironed out before agreement can be reached at New York talks.

+ Three Italian UNOSOM II soldiers killed in Mogadishu; attackers said to belong to General Aidid's faction; Secretary-General, expressing condolences, says steps will be taken to reinforce security.

+ Secretary-General, in report to Security Council, recommends preventive deployment of 50 military observers to discourage conflict in Abkhazia; warns that escalation could threaten Caucasus region.

+ Secretary-General appoints Brigadier-General Romeo Dallaire of Canada as Chief Military Observer of UNOMUR; ten Member States offer to provide personnel.

+ General Assembly President, in Latvia, meets with Chairman of Supreme Council and Foreign Minister; discusses situation regarding withdrawal of foreign military forces from Baltic States and human rights.

+ Central European Initiative States say closure of Adriatic oil pipeline in former Yugoslavia is causing severe economic losses; say reopening it, with UNPROFOR help, would contribute to peace efforts in area.

+ UNHCR, marking first anniversary of humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo, says 45,500 metric tons of supplies have been delivered to besieged city in 4,150 sorties.

* * *

The Haitian Armed Forces have accepted a plan drafted by Dante Caputo, the Special Envoy for Haiti of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS), aimed at solving the country's

(more)

For information media—not an official record

political crisis, according to a United Nations spokesman. However, some small details had to be ironed out before a final agreement could be reached.

The plan was put forward yesterday by the Special Envoy at ongoing talks with the Haitian parties in New York. The talks, which began on Sunday, are aimed at bringing about the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and the restoration of constitutional government to Haiti.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in Geneva, today expressed regret after three Italian soldiers with the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) were killed in Mogadishu. He met with Italian Foreign Minister Beniamino Andreatta and expressed his condolences to the Italian Government and people, and to the families of the deceased. He stressed that he would reinforce security measures to allow UNOSOM II to implement its peaceful mission, including the disarmament of Somali factions.

The Italian soldiers were killed after taking part in a disarmament operation, according to a United Nations spokesman. Their 300-strong force encountered roadblocks and rock-throwing crowds, and then came under fire from a variety of weapons. Helicopters belonging to the United States Quick Reaction Force subsequently engaged armed militia men on the ground, and a number of them were killed or wounded in the incident. In addition to the three Italian soldiers killed, 11 were wounded, along with four Somali policemen working with UNOSOM II. The spokesmen went on to say that the militia men belonged to General Mohamed Farah Aidid's faction.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has recommended that 50 United Nations military observers be deployed to discourage the escalation of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, particularly in the city of Sukhumi. In a report to the Security Council on the situation in Abkhazia, dated 1 July, he warned that the conflict could have severe consequences for the whole Caucasus region. He said the observers would help reinstate the May cease-fire agreement between Georgian and Abkhaz forces -- which held for two weeks -- report on violations and help to restore the status quo, and try to establish communications between the two sides.

The Secretary-General noted that there were dangers in deploying United Nations personnel when an agreed cease-fire was not being respected, but said the risk was justified given the urgent need to get the conflict under control. He also made the point that the United Nations should think carefully before undertaking a peace-keeping operation not linked to a political process with a reasonable prospect of success; otherwise, there was a danger of open-ended peace-keeping commitments from which it might be difficult to withdraw without causing new hostilities.

The Secretary-General said that if the Security Council endorsed his proposal, the observers would be deployed as soon as contributing Governments

(more)

could make them available, and that he would ask the Russian Federation for logistical support.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has decided to appoint Brigadier-General Romeo A. Dallaire of Canada as Chief Military Observer of the United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR). In a letter to the President of Security Council, dated 30 June, he proposed that UNOMUR consist of military observers from Bangladesh, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Fiji, Hungary, Netherlands, Senegal, Slovakia and Zimbabwe. All of those Member States had expressed their readiness, in principle, to make personnel available.

Outgoing Security Council President Juan Antonio Yañez-Barnuevo of Spain told the Secretary-General in a letter that the Council had agreed to his proposals. The Council decided in resolution 846 (1993) to establish UNOMUR to monitor the Uganda/Rwanda border to verify that no military assistance reaches Rwanda, where the Government has been in conflict with the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF). The Mission will be deployed on the Ugandan side of the border for an initial period of six months, subject to review every six months.

* * *

General Assembly President Stoyan Ganev (Bulgaria) today began an official visit to Latvia by meeting with the Chairman of the Latvian Supreme Council. They discussed the situation in Latvia in the context of Assembly resolutions 47/21 and 47/115, which deal, respectively, with the withdrawal of foreign military forces from the Baltic States and the situation of human rights in Latvia and Estonia. Mr. Ganev later discussed those issues with the Latvian Foreign Minister.

* * *

Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia have said they are suffering severe economic damage because of the closure of the Adriatic oil pipeline as a result of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. The Permanent Representatives of those countries to the United Nations told the Secretary-General in a letter that the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) could play a major role in reactivating the pipline, which partly runs through United Nations Protected Areas (UNPA).

The nine States, which participate in the Central European Initiative, stressed that the pipeline was of vital importance to them, and that its reopening would aid peaceful efforts to normalize the situation in the former Yugoslavia.

* * *

(more)

Since the beginning of the humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo one year ago on Saturday, around 45,500 metric tons of supplies have been delivered to the beseiged city's 380,000 residents, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The airlift -- one of the longest since the Berlin blockade of 1948-1949 -- is coordinated by the UNHCR and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).

Sarajevo has on several occasions been entirely dependent on the airlift for food, medicine and shelter materials, UNHCR said. After more than 4,150 sorties, some 64 security incidents, such as anti-aircraft fire and radar "lock-ons", have been reported.

* *** *